

**MEMORANDUM**  
**DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH**

March 26, 2001

To: To All Commissioned Conservation Officers, Division of Wildlife and Public Affairs staff

From: Dan Brooks

Subject: Feeding protected wildlife vs. baiting

From time to time questions come up about feeding wildlife. Here is our interpretation of feeding wildlife versus baiting wildlife for hunting:

Please consider:

The law prohibits placing, exposing, depositing, distributing or scattering any salt, grain, scent or other feed on or over areas where hunters are attempting to take protected game mammals or game birds.

***It is unlawful for anyone to take or attempt to take any protected species by baits or scents.***

Scents masking agents on one's person are allowed. Likewise, using baits and scents for lawful trapping of furbearer is allowed.

Anyone can feed wildlife for viewing, photographing or other enjoyment as long as they are not creating an attractive nuisance.

It is unlawful for any person to cause a nuisance game animal problem by baiting, feeding, or otherwise enticing game animals to an area (feeding bear or deer in your backyard which creates a threat to yourself or neighbors, including eating their tulips).

To clear up any misunderstanding between baiting and feeding, it will be our practice, to not take any law enforcement action as long as the feeding ceases 10 days prior to hunting (which is consistent with federal laws). When queried by anyone feeding animals that may be hunted, like quail, deer, elk, etc., officers should let people know to:

- Stop feeding at least 10 days before the season starts.
- Make sure all foods; salts and scents are completely gone prior to hunting.

Exemption: Class A Parks for hunting, capturing or harvesting their own game; normal farming practices (i.e. planting, growing and manipulation of crops). Shooting preserve are NOT exempt from the above.

Although I can not possibly foresee all circumstances an officer may encounter inside of this 10 day practice, it is mandatory that each officer weighs the evidence and merits of each circumstance encountered before going forward with prosecution.

Federal Rules for Migratory Birds:

Any grain or food source placed or scattered must have been removed completely, ten (10) days prior to any hunting being done.

Exempted from this are standing crops and those that have been manipulated following normal agricultural practices. Hunters must consult with the USFWS for a complete set of federal laws.